

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

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In The Matter Of)

)
Amendment of Parts 2 and 15 of the)
Commission's Rules to Deregulate the)
Equipment Authorization Requirements)
for Digital Devices)

ET Docket No. 95-19

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COMMENTS OF
APPLE COMPUTER, INC.

Apple Computer, Inc. ("Apple"), pursuant to Section 1.415 of the Commission's Rules, hereby comments on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the above-captioned proceeding, released on February 7, 1995 (the "NPRM"). In the NPRM, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC" or "Commission") proposes to replace the existing certification process for personal computers and their peripherals with a new process based upon a manufacturer's or supplier's Declaration of Conformity ("DoC"). The Commission also would permit personal computers to be authorized based on tests and DoCs of computer components, without further testing of the completed assembly.

Apple is a manufacturer of personal computer products for consumer, business, education, government, and scientific applications. Apple markets a wide range of computer products, peripheral devices, and upgrade solutions to a broad customer base. Apple is a long-time proponent of a manufacturer's self-declaration process and has been pursuing a modification of the present certification process for the past four years. Apple supports the Commission's proposal to streamline the equipment authorization process for personal computers and their peripherals. Apple agrees with the Commission that the proposed process would save manufacturers certification/approval time, thereby reducing the time to get products to market, and would stimulate

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competition in the industry.

I. SUMMARY OF APPLE'S COMMENTS

1. Apple supports the implementation of a manufacturer's self-declaration process.
2. Apple supports use of a small compliance logo on the product label in lieu of a narrative compliance statement.
3. Apple does not support the requirement to reproduce the DoC in the product manual. The manufacturer should have the option either of including the DoC in the manual or of including a reference as to where a copy of the DoC can be obtained. Apple further suggests that the Commission simplify and shorten the text that is required to be included in the user's manual under the existing rules.
4. Apple believes that the Commission should require that manufacturers and suppliers submit a copy of the DoC to the FCC when a product is offered for sale in the United States.
5. Apple proposes two options for the authorization of modular personal computers, as discussed below.

II. MANUFACTURERS DECLARATION OF CONFORMITY

Apple supports the Commission's proposal to relax the certification process for personal computers and their peripherals by implementing a manufacturers' DoC. However, there is no need to include a copy of the DoC in the user manual.¹ Apple's customer support information shows that customers care very little about this information. Instead, a manufacturer should have the option either of putting the actual DoC in the manual or of directing the interested customer to a company source for obtaining the DoC.

¹ See NPRM at ¶ 6.

Apple also believes that the Commission should be aware of all products that are being marketed in the United States. Therefore, the Commission should require companies to file a copy of the DoC with the Commission (either by electronic means or by mail) prior to or at the same time that the product is when a product is offered for sale here. The notice should include the address of the company responsible for compliance (formerly the Grantee), the model number or "family" number that is used to identify the product, a statement indicating the specific rules governing the product, and the signature of a person at the company who is responsible for the product.²

III. PRODUCT LABELING

Under the FCC's current rules, labels containing the FCC Identifier and a Part 15 compliance statement must be attached to each personal computer and peripheral.³ There is no need to continue this approach. Apple encourages the Commission to revise its entire product labeling scheme in the context of this proceeding.

With the growing number of compliance statements and logos required worldwide, space for labels on computer products is now very limited. In particular, the Part 15 compliance statement takes up a relatively large amount of space, yet Apple believes that this statement is of no practical value to end-users. The current Part 15 compliance statement does not specify the FCC classification of the product and refers to the limits of Part 15 operation without providing any guidance of how to determine the existence of, or how to resolve, unwanted interference.

The Commission, therefore, should adopt a small compliance logo for use on a product label and state that this logo is the only FCC compliance information required on the product.⁴ Apple would prefer a NFTA logo but, if the timing on approval of such a logo would delay the

² There should be no requirement that the person signing this submission be a resident of the United States.

³ 47 C.F.R. §§ 2.925, 15.19.

⁴ The logo also could be used to indicate if FCC Part 68 registration applies.

Commission's efforts to streamline the certification process, an FCC logo will suffice in the interim.

The commission may want to evaluate as an alternate recognition of the "CE" mark as a compliance mark. In most cases, the "CE" mark represents compliance with a more stringent set of rules and indicates that the product passes both emissions and immunity limits. If the "CE" mark is used for a product that must be tested above 1 GHz, the DoC also should state that the product was tested to ANSI C63.4 above 1 GHz.

IV. CUSTOMER MANUAL STATEMENTS

Apple does not support the continued application of the Commission's requirements to include radio interference statements in the user manual, particularly since, as the NPRM acknowledges, there have been few interference problems. Apple encourages the Commission to simplify the required text in the manual by deleting the reference to radio and television interference and, instead, providing information on the FCC classification of the product and a company source for obtaining a copy of the DoC.

V. TEST SITE ACCREDITATION

Apple does not support the NPRM's proposal to require that laboratories testing personal computers and peripherals be NVLAP-accredited.⁵ The present FCC listing process has worked satisfactorily and there are few if any problems with the personal computer installed base. In contrast, the NVLAP process, as it exists today, is much too burdensome and too costly in terms of record keeping, effort, and support; in addition, it may be too subjective and dependent upon industry professionals to do evaluations because NIST itself does not have the manpower to do all the test site evaluations that would be required. Additionally, Apple believes that the "Proficiency Evaluation" scheme used by NVLAP will impose a costly burden on test facilities.

⁵ NPRM at ¶ 8.

Apple, therefore, suggests that the present NVLAP process be relaxed. In addition, the FCC should retain its test site listing process and permit test facilities to choose between a revised NVLAP approval or the FCC test site listing process. Apple further recommends that the FCC improve its test site listing scheme to a site certification scheme, modeled after the ISO 9000 quality process system, while the NVLAP system is being revamped. An ISO 9000-type quality system is used for Product Safety Laboratory accreditation and has been very successfully used by major manufacturers, including Apple.

VI. AUTHORIZATION OF MODULAR PERSONAL COMPUTERS

Apple recognizes that modularity in computer design is growing and that the growth of the market for modular products continues to challenge the Commission's objective of assuring compliance with FCC standards. The Commission has suggested several approaches to achieve compliance with respect to power supplies, CPU boards, and enclosures. If the Commission's goal is to continue to assure that only compliant products are introduced into the marketplace, Apple believes that the authorization of modular devices should require tighter limits and some form of special labeling. Apple, therefore, is proposing two options for consideration.

One option is to require power supplies and CPU boards to be tested to limits that are 6 dB below the present FCC Class B Limits. These devices would also need to be tested using a minimum configuration of a CPU board (in the case of the power supply), a display, a keyboard, a pointing device, if needed, a serial device, and a parallel device. Particularly when the assembled parts are placed in an enclosure, this would ensure sufficient margin in the final product configuration to keep the device compliant when add-on cards and other devices are used.

Apple, moreover, believes that testing the compliance of enclosures as stand-alone devices will be difficult, since enclosures contain no active devices, require grounding schemes that work in

conjunction with CPU boards, and cannot function by themselves. Therefore, enclosures should not be authorized as stand-alone devices. The assembled modular product should be labeled to indicate that it was tested as a modular device and the label should include the clock speed of the CPU used for the test.

A second option would be to require that modular devices be tested to the present FCC Class B limits, while complete products tested as systems would be tested to the FCC Class A limits. These options would be available to both large manufacturer and small "storefronts." Due to the fact that there is a probable emission level compromise in the modular approach, this option would, in essence, place devices tested in either of the two configurations on an equal footing, rather than imposing a *de facto* higher standard on devices tested as complete systems. Moreover, in light of the lack of interference under the present testing regime for assembled systems, this option would be unlikely to result in objectionable interference to other spectrum users.

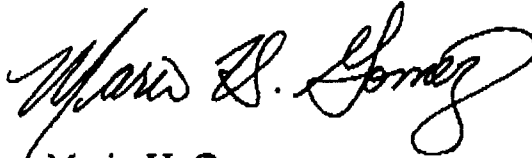
Finally, this option would impose no stricter requirements on modular devices than already are in place and would provide an incentive (in the form of a relaxed emissions limit) for those choosing to test an entire system configuration as a unit. Overall, this approach would provide a compliance path for small "storefronts" and would save manufacturers a substantial amount in designing in the extra 10 dB that is now required to meet the Class B limits. Most importantly, this approach would reduce the cost of computer systems to the consumer.

CONCLUSION

Apple supports the Commission's proposal for a manufacturer's self-declaration process, with the added requirement to send a copy of the DoC to the Commission when a product is offered for sale in the United States. Apple does not support the requirement to reproduce the DoC in the product manual. The manufacturer should have the option either of including the DoC in the manual or of including a reference to a company source for a copy of the DoC. Apple further supports the Commission's proposal for a small compliance logo in place of a compliance statement on the product label and encourages the Commission to reduce the amount of required compliance text in the product manual.

Apple does not support the present NVLAP system for test site accreditation and encourages the Commission to retain the present FCC test site listing process, while offering a revised NVLAP process as an alternative. Apple has provided two options for the modular computer authorization, but urges the Commission to proceed with the implementation of the manufacturer's DoC process, if the problems of certifying modular devices prove too difficult to resolve quickly.

Respectfully submitted,



Mario H. Gomez
Senior Manager,
Research & Development

Apple Computer Inc.
1 Infinite Loop MS 26A
Cupertino, Ca. 95014
(408) 974-2618

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